The Evolution of the International Development Research Centre

An Interpretation by Shirley Seward.

".....there is no joy in the hot stench of poverty, no colorfulness in rags and tatters, no gaiety in disease and illiteracy, no hope in hunger, no goal to strive for, and few personal satisfactions in life itself. For such conditions there can be, on our part, no proper mixture of sympathy of aloofness".

Maurice Strong,
Director General of External Aid Office,
November 23, 1967.

Speech given to Women's Canadian Club
of London.

"If free civilization is to survive and grow, we must very soon find vastly improved methods for extending the benefits of modern existence to the world community of man".

Right Honourable Lester B. Pearson,
Prime Minister of Canada.

Speech Delivered to the Canadian Political
Science Association, Carleton University,
June 8, 1967.

"Despite the fact that this need is fundamental to the whole development process and that this field is a new and complex one, less than one-half of 1 per cent of the aid budgets of donor countries is currently devoted to development research at a time when the average growth corporation in North America spends approximately 6 per cent of its annual income for these purposes."

Hon. Mitchell Sharp,
Secretary of State for External Affairs.

Speech delivered in House of Commons,
January 12, 1970.

"The report of the Pearson Commission identified an aid weariness in many donor nations. I am sure the Commission also encountered an aid weariness among the recipients. It is a weariness born of being too long a supplicant suffering the donor's quiet arrogance and his implicit denial of sovereign equality. In the case of research institutions that play a donor role, this recipient weariness is aggravated by a fear that the alleged benefits of collaboration are in reality illusory."

W. David Hopper, President,
International Development Research Centre.

Statement to the Inaugural Meeting
of the Board of Governors of the
International Development Research
Centre.

October 26, 1970.

A Note on Sources -

The author has had free access to all the early documents contained in the Archival files of the Centre. For the purposes of this work, the most important, to which extensive references are made, are listed chronologically as follows:

1) Strong, M. F., Speech delivered to Women's Canadian Club of London, November 23, 1967.

2) Pearson, The Right Hon. Lester B., Speech delivered Canadian Political Science Association, Carleton University, June 8, 1967.

3) Plumptre, A.F.W., "Proposed International Development Research Institution", January 24, 1968.

4) Report of the Steering Committee, September 3, 1968.

5) Papers written by members of the Steering Committee's Task Force.

6) Hopper, D. W., "Statement to the Inaugural Meeting of the Board of Governors of the International Development Research Centre", Ottawa, October 26, 1970.

7) International Development Research Centre, Annual Report, 1972-73.

8) Hopper, D. W., "Research Policy: Eleven Issues", Outline Statement to the Board of Governors of the International Development Research Centre at their meeting in Bogota, Colombia, March 19, 1973.

9) Plumptre, A.F.W., Letter sent to Canadian University Service Overseas with respect to Board of Governors, February 21, 1974.

The following public sources were also consulted:

1) House of Commons Debates
Senate Debates

2) House of Commons Committee Proceedings including Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence of Subcommittee on International Development Assistance
Senate Committee Proceedings.

3) Votes and Proceedings of the House of Commons
Votes and Proceedings of the Senate

4) Bill C-12

In addition, the following individuals were personally interviewed:

1) Hopper, W. D., President, member of the Executive Committee and Finance Committee, International Development Research Centre

2) Hulse, J. H., Director, Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Sciences, International Development Research Centre

3) Brown, G. F., Director, Population and Health Sciences, International Development Research Centre

4) Zagorin, R. K., Director, Social Sciences and Human Resources, International Development Research Centre

5) Woolston, J. E., Director, Information Sciences, International Development Research Centre

6) Pfeifer, J. C., Secretary, International Development Research Centre

7) Plumptre, A.F.W., Member of Board of Governors (until 1972), Member of Executive Committee and Finance Committee (1971-72), Special Advisor to the President

8) Bene, J. G., Member of Board of Governors, Member of Executive Committee, President of Finance Committee, International Development Research Centre; Special Advisor, Canadian International Development Agency.

Strong, Maurice, Member of Board of Governors (until 1972), Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme.

9) Brecher, I., Member of Board of Governors, Member of Executive Committee, International Development Research Centre; Economic Council of Canada

10) Oldham, G. H., Associate Director, Social Sciences and Human Resources, International Development Research Centre; Science Policy Research Unit, University of Sussex.

11) Laquian, A. A., Associate Director, Social Sciences and Human Resources, International Development Research Centre.

The author is most grateful to the above-named for the generous time and interest they contributed to this work. A special thanks is extended to A.F.W. Plumptre for his continual guidance and inspiration.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DRAFT.

March 24, 1975.

or 1974?

INTRODUCTION

One of the most striking phenomena of the third quarter of the Twentieth Century has been the conscious and deliberate attempt to transform traditional societies through the transfer of resources from affluent to poor nations. Although the motivation for, and form of, such transfer have varied from country to country, and over time, the basic purpose has been to accelerate the economic development of the two-thirds of the world's population afflicted by poverty and deprivation.

The historical precedents influencing the initiation of international development assistance in the fifties were two-fold: the termination of European colonialism and the concomitment emergence of newly independent nations; and, the optimism springing from the incredible success of Marshall Plan capital assistance in restoring the war-torn economies of Europe. Accordingly, it was hoped that the transfer of resources could similarly stimulate economic development in the less developed areas of the Third World.

The concept of the importance of science and technology to development has been a recurrent theme throughout the history of international assistance; and has influenced the form of transfer from developed to developing countries. Thus, in the early years, aid took the form of the transfer of capital, considered, as a result of the

Marshall Plan success, to be the most important missing factor of production in underdeveloped economies. It was hoped that, as in the case with Europe, within a very few years aid would no longer be required. However, this aspiration was soon proven to be unfounded; for, whereas the peoples of Europe "had the attitudes, motivations and institutions favourable to development"(1), the situation was radically different in Third World countries. The productivity of capital investment in the absence of human resources was very limited.

The recognition that "the capacity of developing countries to absorb capital effectively was sharply limited by shortages of skills both in technical and scientific activities..."(2) resulted in capital assistance being supplemented by a second form of aid: support for educational activities, subsumed under the label of technical assistance.

Nevertheless, impending famine at the dawn of the sixties necessitated a reappraisal of the philosophy of development assistance. Through such examination came the realization that "...embodied in the transfer campaign were the technologies of applied science developed in and suited to the modern donor cultures; technologies largely unadapted to the particular needs of the recipient peoples."(3)

This perspective resulted, at least in the field of agriculture, to the appreciation of the need for a third type of assistance: scientific research specifically aimed at problems of the tropical, developing countries themselves. This does not imply, of course, that such research had heretofore not been undertaken. In fact, long before the advent of development assistance per se, the colonial powers had set up research bodies in the fields of tropical agriculture and medicine. However, it was during the sixties that the potential of such research began to be fully appreciated.

The great surge of confidence during the sixties in the infinite possibilities of the application of science and technology to development was reflected in international interest and action in the field. Interest was formally articulated in 1961, when the United Nations called for a Conference on the Application of Science and Technology for the Benefit of the Less Developed Areas (UNCSAT). The general theme was

> "....the challenging opportunities for accelerating economic development through the more effective application of existing science and technology and through research specifically designed to produce new applications of special interest to less developed countries."(4)

The Conference, in turn, set up the U.N. Advisory Committee on the Application of Science and Technology to Development (ACAST). In 1966, this Committee proposed that a World Plan of Action

for the Application of Science and Technology to Development[5] be formulated, and, indeed, this Plan was eventually incorporated into the UN International Development Strategy.[6]

Recurrent topics of these conferences were: the unfathomable potential of the application of science and technology to development; and, at the same time, the rejection of the idea that developing countries should depend essentially on the transfer of technology from DCs. Rather, it was stressed that "...the obtaining of technology from advanced countries and the building up of a scientific and technological capacity are, in fact, complimentary."[7]

This intellectual activity in the field of scientific research related to developing country problems was accompanied by significant research activity and results in the sixties. Perhaps most exciting was the establishment, by the Rockefeller and Ford Foundations, of a number of international agricultural research centres. The first of these, the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Centre (CIMMYT) had its roots many years before in a cooperative Mexican-Rockefeller venture. The fruits of its research activity were new high-yielding lines of wheat. Similarly, the International Rice Research Institute, founded by Ford and Rockefeller in 1962 in the Phillipines, produced new varities of rice. These dramatic breakthroughs together culminated in the well-known success of the 'Green Revolution'. Encouraged by these results, Ford and Rockefeller, by the late sixties, had established

two more agricultural research centres.

Notwithstanding these developments during the years considered, the termination of the First Development Decade was accompanied by agonizing disappointment and disenchantment with the results of the international aid effort. Not only had the development gap not been narrowed, but, it had, in fact, widened. Moreover, despite the faith that had been placed in the unlimited powers of the application of science and technology to development, the widening gap between industrialized and developing countries was perceived mainly as a science and technology gap:

> "The well-known gap between the living standards of the less developed countries and those of the highly developed countries has its parallel also in science and technology; indeed the growing gap between the amount of research and application in developed and developing countries, and between their levels of technology is one of the major factors in the growing gap in living standards. Whether one considers the number and equipment of research institutions or the number of scientific and technical personnel, or the technology of production, there is a striking contrast between the industrialized, wealthy countries and the developing countries. One consequence of this is that only a very small fraction of the world's scientific and technical resources is devoted to the problems of the developing countries; the overwhelming proportion of the world's intellectual capital, as well as its physical capital, is applied towards meeting the needs of the highly developed countries." (8)

More specifically, according to a study undertaken by the 'Sussex Group', prior to the onset of the Second Development Decade, 98 per cent of all research and development outside the socialist world was performed by the industrialized countries, with the developing nations contributing only 2 per cent.(9) Or, stated in other terms, the Third World was spending, on average, only 0.2 per cent of their GNP on research and development, as compared with between 1 and 3 per cent for the industrialized countries.(10) Furthermore, the situation was worsened in that research in the latter nations was not only, in large part, irrelevant to developing world needs, but was in some cases (e.g. synthetics), actually detrimental.

Moreover, even in cases of highly significant research results - for example, the high yielding strains of wheat and rice - there was evidence of a task not completed:

> "... the approach taken in agriculture focused primarily on enhancing food availability. The research teams concentrated on the identifiable technical barriers to greater output and undertook to overcome or circumvent them. In doing so, they implicitly or explicitly ignored many of the social and economic consequences of providing the technical base for a dynamic agriculture that meshed readily with the foundations of a growing national economy. In other words, the single purpose focus on production research neglected the many other complementary components that comprise the totality of a national agriculture.(11)

Growing awareness of this dearth of research relevant to developing country needs led to the conclusion that the

panacea for development lay not merely in the transfer of science and technology. Rather, in the philosophy for the Second Development Decade, the concept of the necessity of an indigenous scientific and technological capacity was reinforced. Moreover, it was stressed that indigenous research should be geared towards the needs of the developing countries, and be of a practical, or applied, nature.

> Once the case for a fundamental research and training element in the national structure of all developing countries has been recognized, the general principle of an orientation in this structure towards local problems should be recognized. In general the scarce resources available, especially at the earlier stages of development, will be more effectively used by being specifically oriented towards application. Where fundamental research is done, it should be as much as possible related to specific national problems, rather than duplicating work done elsewhere, (12)

Finally, it was deemed important that such research should be inter-disciplinary, in order to mitigate economic, political, and social problems created by the infusion of new technologies, as had been evidenced with respect to the new wheat and rice varieties.

Thus, through the evolution of philosophical concepts related to international development assistance, the stage had been prepared for development research, and a new style of aid. The first organization to be established for the purpose of supporting research activities as defined by developing countries perceptions of research priorities, and, at the same time, to develop indigenous

scientific and technological capability, was the International Development Research Centre, established in Canada at the commencement of the seventies. Because the Centre's style represents a truly innovative contribution to development assistance, it is the purpose of this paper to examine the nature of the organization, and to delve into the history of its formation.

References and Notes

(1) Bauer, P. T., "Foreign Aid: an Instrument for Progress?" in Ward, Barbara, and Bauer, P.T., Two Views on Aid to Developing Countries, The Institute of Economic Affairs, 1966, p.34.

(2) Higgins, B., "The Evaluation of Technical Assistance," in International Journal, Vol. XXV, No. 1, Winter 1969-70, p. 34 35

(3) Hopper, David W., President, "Statement to the Inaugural Meeting of the Board of Governors of the International Development Research Centre, Ottawa, Canada, October 26, 1970, IDRC-002e, p.2.

(4) United Nations, Revised Information Bulletin, United Nations Conference on the Application of Science and Technology for the Benefit of Less Developed Areas, Geneva, 1963, United Nations, New York, E/CONF.39/INF.1/Rev.1, p.3.

(5) United Nations, World Plan of Action for the Application of Science and Technology to Development, United Nations, New York, 1971.

(6) International Development Strategy, Action Programme of the General Assembly for the Second United Nations Development Decade, United Nations, New York, 1970.

(7) World Plan of Action ..., op. cit., p.31.

(8) United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Science and Technology for Development, Proposals for the Second United Nations Development Decade, United Nations, New York, 1970, p.5.

(9) Annex II "Draft Introductory Statement for the World Plan of Action for the Application of Science and Technology to Development prepared by the Sussex Group," in Science and Technology for Development: Proposals for the Second United Nations Development Decade, Report of the Advisory Committee on the Application of Science and Technology to Development, New York, 1970. /10

(10) ~~Ibid.~~

(11) "Statement to the Inaugural Meeting..."op.cit., p. 2.

(12) World Plan of Action...op. cit., p.54

An Overview of the International Development Research Centre

The International Development Research Centre, established in May 1970 with the passage of an Act of the Canadian Parliament, is a public corporation characterized by political independence and financial freedom and flexibility unprecedented in the international scene. The most striking evidence of the Centre's independence is inherent in the international character of the Board of Governors, consisting of 21 members, 10 of whom are non-Canadians (including six from the developing countries). The flexibility and freedom of the Centre are exemplified by its financial arrangements. As a public rather than a government agency, the Centre enjoys two advantages: firstly, annual appropriations do not lapse, but can be accumulated; and, secondly, because the Centre does not fall under the Financial Administration Act, it is not bound by Treasury Board regulations.

The raison d'etre of the Centre, as outlined in the corporate objects of the Act, is "....to initiate, encourage, support and conduct research into the problems of the developing regions of the world and into the means for applying and adapting scientific, technical and other knowledge to the economic and social advancement of these regions, and, in carrying out these objects

(a) to enlist the talents of natural and social scientists and technologists of Canada and other countries;

(b) to assist the developing regions to build up the research capabilities, the innovative skills and the institutions required to solve their problems;

(c) to encourage generally the coordination of international development research; and

(d) to foster cooperation in research on development problems between the developed and developing regions for their mutual benefit."(1)

With respect to the introductory broad statement of purpose, the Centre undertakes to encourage and support research - focused on science and technology - into the problems of developing regions. In popular jargon, this is referred to as "developmental research". Moreover, in the quest for direct solutions to specific development problems, the Centre has maintained "a strong orientation to assisting research that has a practical, or an applied, significance for the economic and social advancement of developing nations."(2)

The 1972-73 Annual Report of the Centre states that "particular pride of place" has been given to objective (b): for, "in major measure, Centre support has focused on building the research skills of scientists and technologists in the developing countries".(3) This emphasis on the "indigenization of research", as it was apparently once coined by Rex Nettleford, reflects the outstanding and unique style of the Centre's operations.

The philosophical bias towards concentration on implementation of objective (b) has several implications for policy: Firstly, the Centre endeavours to place strong emphasis on acceptance of, and support for, project priorities as defined by the developing countries themselves, rather than through an enthnocentric exercise of Centre judgement as to the "proper" priorities. Secondly, the Centre has focused support on researchers indigenous to the developing regions, involving Western scientists only when there is a clear advantage in doing so. Thirdly, in addition to support for the finding of solid research results of "international standard", ("product-oriented" research), the Centre recognizes the great importance of "process-oriented" research, i.e. the provision of on-the-job research opportunities and training for the LDC research scientists and technologists. These three policy issues are subsumed under the Centre's central ideal of "responsiveness" to LDC requirements; or, in colloquial terms, the ideal of research in, for, and initiated and executed by the developing countries.

Objective (a) - the enlistment of the talents of natural and social scientists and technologists of Canada and other countries - has been implemented in as much as an international staff has been recruited and competence has been sought throughout the world. Wherever possible, staff has been recruited from the LDCs. Otherwise, preference is given to Canadians over individuals from other developed countries.

Objective (d) - with its emphasis on mutual benefit for developed (especially Canada) and developing countries - can better be phrased as the element of mutual cooperation. Mutual benefit implies that research activities be undertaken to solve problems common to Canada and the developing countries. This is clearly not the case. The Centre's pre-eminent concern is with problems of the developing countries. Although there are examples of project results which could have relevance for Canada, the possibility of spin-off and mutual benefit is not a criterion for selection of projects. The aspect of mutual cooperation, on the other hand, is important in the Centre's operations. The solution of certain LDC problems - especially in the "hard" sciences - requires a substantial amount of "basic" research to support the specific, applied research undertaken in the LDCs. This "basic" research can often best be done in a developed country such as Canada, where the scientific infrastructure already exists. In this way, the Centre taps Canadian expertise in dealing with developing country priorities.

Finally, objective (c), the co-ordination of international development research, has been operationalized along three dimensions of the Centre's activities. Firstly, there is the concern with the establishment of international information and data banks. The Centre's role is to support cooperative initiatives in the United Nations family, devoting particular attention to ensuring that developing countries are able to exploit the banks to meet their

needs. The Centre has no substantial inhouse activity in this area, concentrating rather on using its flexibility and dynamism to initiate, support, or improve the facilities of large, established, international bodies. The second dimension of the Centre's coordinating activities is the organization of "research networks" in the developing countries. This is a truly innovative mechanism by which LDC researchers from different developing countires are brought together to discuss, in work-shop fashion, problems of common interest. Through the networks, a dual purpose is realized: (a) the coordination of research efforts in several developing countries, thus preventing the duplication of results, and (b) the creative opportunity for LDC researchers to clarify and articulate their priorities through a concerted effort. Thirdly, in order to minimize duplication of efforts, close informal links are maintained with other donor agencies. (4) In addition, the Centre plays an important coordinating and innovating role in the international agricultural research centres located in the developing countries.

In order to place a manageable limitation on the broad, overall purpose of supporting research into the problems of developing countries, activities have so far been restricted to four programme areas: Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Sciences, Information Sciences, Population and Health Sciences, and Social Sciences and Human Resources. The cumulative total program projects approved as of March 31st, 1974 indicate that the greatest percentage

of the Centre's funds are devoted to Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Sciences (38.3%), followed by Social Sciences and Human Resources (29.4%), Population and Health Sciences (19.7%), and, lastly, Information Sciences (12.6%).

The rationale underlying the selection of each of the programme areas is not difficult to uncover. Firstly, despite the major breakthroughs of the Green Revolution, the reality of starving millions still persisted at the commencement of the seventies. Moreover, malnutrition, which is to great extent a matter of ignorance and inappropriate food habits, is "... a more serious scourge to mankind even than hunger." (5) Consequently, a fundamental need for increased research in the area of agriculture, food, and nutrition sciences was perceived. Secondly, it was deemed crucial that research be undertaken in the field of population lest agricultural advances be outdistanced by the rate of population growth. Thirdly, in the area of social sciences, little research, especially of an applied nature, had been undertaken. The lesson of social and economic problems in Mexico with relation to new crop technologies had suggested the need for a comprehensive, inter-disciplinary approach to research. Finally, growing concern with the lack of co-ordination of international research efforts and the inaccessability of research results to developing countries led to the formation of a separate information division.

To further narrow the Centre's breadth of concerns, the predominant focus is on research to improve the well-being of rural peoples, both farm and non-farm. This choice was made on two grounds: firstly, the greater part of the population of developing countries is located in the rural areas; and, secondly, it is the people living outside the relatively modernized, urban areas who are most directly affected by change and development.

Even such a cursory overview of the philosophy and early operations of the IDRC ignites the imagination to pose several questions. Firstly, through the inspiration of which individuals, and in what philosophical medium, did the concept of the Centre take root and evolve? Secondly, what was the genesis of such elements as independence, internationalism, flexibility, developmental research in science and technology, coordination, and responsiveness?; and when and why did other ideas, such as mutual benefit, languish along the path? Thirdly, how, in operational terms, does the Centre currently function? For example, to what extent can the Centre achieve the ideal of responsiveness, i.e., its orientation to research in, for, and initiated and executed by the developing countries. Finally, in what ways has the Centre's unique style affected the international community?

In order to answer these fundamental questions, it is necessary to examine the evolution of the IDRC, from its earliest germination in 1967 to the present date. For purposes of clarity and

and elaboration, the evolution of ideas is considered below in four distinct, but overlapping phases. Phase I identifies the earliest germination of ideas in the minds of Maurice Strong and The Right Hon. Lester B. Pearson. Phase II considers the activities and philosophy of the Steering Committee established by Cabinet. Included in the activities of the Committee are the Plumptre feasibility study, and the establishment of a supporting Task Force. Phase III discusses the drafting the legislation, and its journey through Cabinet, the House of Commons, and the Senate. Phase IV, consisting of three parts, describes the vision of David Hopper, and its implementation. Part A outlines Hopper's proposals and considers the mechanism involved in fulfilling the ideal of responsiveness. Parts B and C are devoted to the Centre's senior staff and Board of Governors respectively. Finally, a concluding section speculates as to what effect the Centre's style and operations are having on the international community.

Reference and Notes -

(1) International Development Research Centre Act, Assented to 13th May, 1970, Revised Statutes of Canada, 1970, 1st Supplement, Ch. 21.

(2) Hopper, David, "Research Policy: Eleven Issues", Outline Statement to the Board of Governors of the International Development Research Centre at their meeting in Bogota, Colombia, March 19, 1973, IDRC-014e.

(3) Ibid.

(4) The Centre maintains close informal dialogue with several other donor agencies, important amongst which are:

Ford Foundation (U.S.)
Rockefeller (U.S.)
IBRD (International Bank for Reconstruction and Development) and CGIAR (Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research)
Also other UN Specialized Agencies including FAO and WHO
UNDP (UN Development Program)
OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development)
CIDA (Canadian International Development Agency)
AID (U.S.) (Agency for International Development)
ODA (U.K.) (Office of Development Assistance)
Agencies in LDCs

(5) Pearson,Lester B.,Chairman, Partners in Development, Report of the Commission on International Development, Praeger Publishers, New York, Washington, London, 1970.

Phase I - Earliest Germination of Ideas

Maurice Strong, presently Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, spent his childhood in humble circumstances. Having finished High School, he made a conscious decision to defer going to University and subsequently embarked on a career which was to startle his contempories.

Strong's background reflects a mixture of business, travel, and humanitarian interests. Highly successful as a financial analyst and executive in the business world, he was, by his mid thirties, the President of Power Corporation of Canada Limited, and an officer or director of some thirty other Canadian and international corporations. His humanitarian interest in development was nurtured by three significant experiences: firstly, in his formative years, Strong was greatly influenced by his encounters with missionaries in Sunday School, and, at a later time, he became involved with lay preaching; secondly, during his late teens he was employed for several months by the Hudson's Bay Company, and worked closely with Canadian eskimos; thirdly, during the years 1952 and 1953 he immersed himself in world-wide travels, (including one year in East Africa), and during this period became involved with the international Young Men's Cristian Association (YMCA).

Upon returning to Canada, Strong had no intention of reasserting himself in the business world; rather, his desire was to become involved in development. Accordingly, he presented himself at the External Aid Office, but, ironically, was turned away due to his lack of academic qualifications. Undaunted, he decided to return to business, using his success as a platform for eventual eligibility to enter the development field.

Such an opportunity presented itself when, in 1966, the External Aid Office was seeking new leadership. So sincere and profound was Strong's commitment to the eradication of global poverty that, when invited by Paul Martin to head the latter organization, he gave up his profitable business concerns and entered the development forum.

* * * *

Emerging from this business background, Strong held strongly to the view that any respectable and viable corporation spends at least five or six per cent of its total annual sales on research and development. Therefore, regarding the business of development to be a crucial world concern, he expected that substantial sums were being devoted to research on problems of development. Consequently, on assuming the Directorship of the External Aid Office in 1966, Strong was appalled that Canada was spending virtually nothing on development research.

During his travels, Strong had become very impressed with the research work of the private bodies (e.g. Ford and Rockefeller), which governmental agencies did not appear to be able, or willing, to do. This favourable impression was reinforced in early 1967, when he visited India and met David Hopper, one of the fathers of the Green Revolution. Excited and ignited both by the success of Rockefeller's research efforts and by Hopper's enthusiasm, Strong returned to Ottawa with the concern as to how Canada could become as innovative as the private organizations in establishing research programmes.

The question immediately arose as to where the research effort should take place. The unsuitability of CIDA soon became apparent. Because Strong believed that it was desirable for the aid agency to be considered an influencial component of overall policy formulation, it was therefore necessary that CIDA remain a government agency. However, such a policy, of necessity, meant lack of political freedom and flexibility. Accordingly, Strong conceived the necessity for a separate body to assume the research function. He envisioned a politically independent organization, with a high degree of flexibility, unconstrained by the bureaucratic and political forces at work in CIDA. Believing that the real gap in development was in research, and seeing to-day's research as tomorrow's development; Strong perceived the new institute's main role as research into

the application or adaptation of the newly-evolving technologies of the industrialized countries to the problems of the developing countries. Moreover, because he suspected that Canada's lack of development research was common to other countries as well, he foresaw the organization as serving not only the Canadian, but also the world need for research. Although Strong was not married, at this time, to any one particular concept as to how such research should be undertaken, he imagined that it would take place in a Canadian centre, but in a centre with firm links with institutions and expertise in the developing world.

In the spring of 1967, Strong discussed his brainchild with the Honourable Paul Martin, who then took an early opportunity to raise the matter with The Right Honourable Lester B. Pearson. The Prime Minister, however, emersed at that time in problems of Government expenditure, reacted coolly, apparently feeling that Canadian external aid was already too high. However, with the assistance of Lady Barbara Ward Jackson, who responded with great enthusiasm to the Strong proposal, Martin reopened the question with Mr. Pearson, who, on this occasion, reacted favourably.

In a speech delivered to the Canadian Political Science Association at Carleton University, the Prime Minister made the first public mention of the proposed research centre. In this speech, Pearson portrayed an institution which

could bring to bear the fruits of technology to development:

> "The rapidly advancing technology and the complex interrelationships of to-day's global society demand that the fundamental problems of man be dealt with on an international and an interprofessional basis...One idea for a new Canadian initiative in meeting this challenge....is for the establishment of a Centre of International Development." (2)

Interestingly, both Mr. Pearson and those individuals in the media who later publicized the idea presented the concept of a 'think-tank', consisting of an international group of experts from a variety of disciplines working together in one centre to find solutions to the problems of development.

In addition to the focus on developmental research in science and technology, both Strong and Pearson conceived an important role of the organization in the area of the coordination of information. The issue of information had always been one of Pearson's priority concerns. Moreover, if the research gap between developed and developing countries was to be reduced, it was deemed crucial by both Strong and Pearson that the developing nations should have ready access to the results of the total international research in the area of development. Consequently, they were hopeful of the new organization developing a large, inhouse, developmental literature data-bank, to which the entire development community, including the developing countries, would have ready access.

During this same period, in the excitement and ambiance of Expo '67, several other individuals besides Strong and Pearson were making proposals to continue the spirit of inter-

nationalism that the World's Fair had sparked in Canada. On July 4, 1967, a number of these, together with the proposal for the the international research institute, were submitted to Cabinet by the Hon. Paul Martin, Secretary of State for External Affairs. The reaction to the Strong/Pearson concept was favourable, as indicated by the August 11 recommendation that a Steering Committee be established to consider the proposal in greater detail.

References and Notes:

(1) Ironically, Strong now holds 21 honorary Doctorate degrees.

(2) Pearson, The Right Hon. Lester B., Speech Delivered to the Canadian Political Science Association, Carleton University, June 8, 1967, in Pearson, L.B., Words and Occasions, Toronto, 1970

Phase II - The Activities and Philosophy of the Steering Committee

The Steering Committee, under the Chairmanship of Maurice Strong, was composed of an impressive membership of senior public servants; including the heads of seventeen departments and agencies.(1) As such, the group represented the 'Establishment' in Ottawa. Predictably, then, the Committee's reaction, and, indeed, its task, was to take a critical view of such an extraordinary new proposal. There was considerable skepticism with respect to two issues: firstly, was the need for development research critical enough that it should take priority over alternative uses of Canadian tax money. More specifically, there was concern that the organization might absorb funds required for educational needs in Canadian universities; and, secondly, would the Canadian institution be duplicating the efforts of other bodies in the world? In short, was there an "international basis" for the proposed institution? In order to allay or confirm this skepticism, the Steering Committee decided that an independent feasibility study be undertaken. For this purpose, two Toronto Principals were recommended: A.F.W. Plumptre of Scarborough College, and D.V. LePan of University-College. Both Plumptre and LePan had long experience in the public service and an interest in aid. As LePan was engaged in other activities at the time, Plumptre was invited to undertake the feasibility study.

In order to assess whether there was an "international basis" for the proposed institution and, if so, what implications this might have for the institution itself, Plumptre had conversations not only with Canadian officials, but also with officers of international and national bodies in the U.S., Britain, and France. The resultant Plumptre report of January 24, 1968 is summarized briefly below.

As a result of his discussions, Plumptre verified that there was indeed an international basis for the proposed research institute in Canada. He concluded that "the need for research in the field under consideration is world-wide and urgent."(2) In addition, he discovered that the fear of the possibility of duplication was unfounded. On the contrary, he was assured that "the world is very short of research in some of the fields we are considering."(3) Moreover, it was not implied in any of the conversations that Canadian funds might better "be contributed to some existing research centre, or added to the Canadian bilateral aid programme, or donated to I.D.A.(4) In fact, it was suggested that Canada had several advantages in this field of research not enjoyed by other industrialized countries.

Having established the need for the Canadian organization, Mr. Plumptre then investigated the Strong/Pearsonian conceptions of (a) research into science and technology, (b) the think-tank operation, and (c) the data-bank role.

Firstly, with respect to the type of research that the Centre should do, there was great support for Strong's proposal of research into the "application or adaptation of the newly-evolving technologies of the industrialized countries to the problems and possibilities of the developing countries."(5)

Secondly, in discussions of the think-tank operation, the Personian concept was considerably altered. Plumptre observed that there was "unanimous opposition to the idea that the research operations.... should be gathered together into a single "centre" - (and housed, as at least one enthusiast has proposed, under one vast plastic dome!)" (6) Rather, it was felt that research should be, to a considerable extent, carried out in the developing countries themselves; or, if in Canada, in industry or universities where research facilities already existed.

Thirdly, in investigating the concept of a data-bank role for the organization, Plumptre encountered marked skepticism. There was a general feeling that "data-banking and processing should grow slowly out of and be associated with an operating programme,"(7) rather than there being a substantial computer element in the project from the outset.

Finally, in addition to investigating the three conceptions above, Plumptre's report also introduced the concept of "mutual benefit". The basic objective, he concluded, "should

be to develop research that responded to the needs of developing countries and which at the same time had application to Canadian experience and Canadian problems."(8) As such, he felt it would enlarge and enrich Canadian research experience, while, at the same time, strengthening Canadian universities and assisting Canadian academics.

* * * *

The Plumptre report had significant input in two respects. Firstly, and most important, the study alleviated the Steering Committee's skepticism with respect to the international basis of the proposed institution. This was evidenced by the Committee's submission to Cabinet on September 3, 1968, recommending the establishment of the Centre. Secondly, as outlined above, Plumptre also made suggestions which somewhat altered the previous Strong/Pearsonian conceptions as to what the organization should do. As will be discussed below, some of these suggestions were articulated in the Report of the Steering Committee.

* * *

The Steering Committee Report described the institute as a Canadian sponsored, independent, non-profit organization with an international character. The independence, however, was to be accompanied by close informal relations with

External Aid and other government agencies. Moreover, as Strong had conceived, it would be designed to undertake research in science and technology into the problems of developing countries.

The medium for organizing such research was Pearson's "think-tank" operation, referring to the process of "policy research". This would involve the assimilation and analysis of data related to particular issues, the development and evaluation of various policy alternatives, and their presentation in usable form to the decision-makers. Largely as a result of Plumptre's input, the original concept of research activity taking place in one Centre was modified to include the contracting out of research, both to institutions in developing countries and to universities and industry in Canada. The Centre's role would be to define the developing country priorities for developmental research, to initiate research activities, and to co-ordinate efforts in Canada and abroad. There was no stated belief, in this Report, that priorities should be defined, and activities initiated, by the LDCs themselves. It was hoped that the new institute could play the role for developing countries that the U.S. Rand and Hudson bodies were filling for developed countries.

Despite the lack of enthusiasm that Plumptre had encountered with respect to data-banking, this role was much emphasized in the Steering Committee Report. No doubt there was considerable pressure from the Strong/Pearson caucus not only for political

reasons (information was an important national concern at the time), but also because there was a serious gap in international data collection, and consequently a hope that the Canadian organization would fill this gap.

The element of mutual benefit, which had been introduced by Plumptre, was reflected as exceedingly important in the Report. In fact, the institute was portrayed as having a dual role: an International Development Role, and a Domestic Role, involving research into problems having relevance for both Canada and the developing regions. It was the main thesis of the Report that both interests could be preserved and enhanced by combining them into one international Centre. It was expected that whereas the International role would be one of initiation of activities, the separate Domestic division would be responsive to Canadian requests. The importance of mutual benefit, with the inclusion of a separate Domestic Division, reflected the general interest of the Establishment in catering to Canadian needs. However, it has been suggested that a more specific motive may have been involved. At the time, the possibility of the establishment of a new 'Brookings Institution' type organization for economic policy research into Canadian problems was being investigated by R. S. Ritchie. The latter recommended the organization on the grounds that it would fill the need for domestic research that the Economic Council of

Canada was not undertaking. Therefore, it is said that the Steering Committee included in their proposed institution the Domestic Role in order to divert the government from establishing an additional research body.

The above discussion outlines the basic strategy recommended by the Steering Committee for the new institute. The Committee agreed that the submission to Cabinet and later to Parliament would have to include a sample of initial work programs. To formulate such a sample, Strong instructed Stuart Peters, Special Advisor at CIDA and Coordinator for the proposed institute, to invite interested Canadian professional people to offer suggestions for research undertakings that seemed to them likely to be relevant to the Centre's purposes. The members of this loosely structured Task Force made proposals with respect to a number of areas of activity.(9)

The Report of the Steering Committee, supported with sample papers written by the Task Force, was submitted to Cabinet on September 3, 1968, at which point The Right Hon. Pierre Elliott Trudeau and the Hon. Mitchell Sharp had replaced the Pearson-Martin team. The Throne Speech of September 12, 1968 indicated the new Government's intention to proceed with the legislation. Finally, on December 17, 1968, a Cabinet Directive gave approval in principle to the proposed institute, subject to detailed consideration of the legislation. The time had now come for the formal drafting of the legislation, and Phase III of the evolution of the IDRC.

Reference and Notes

1. Membership of the Steering Committee established under the Chairmanship of Maurice Strong -

J.R.Baldwin	- Deputy Minister of Transport
R.B. Bryce	- Deputy Minister of Finance
M. Cadieux	- Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs
G.F. Davidson	- Secretary of Treasury Board
J.F. Grandy	- Deputy Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs
A.D.P. Heeney	- Chairman Canadian Section, Permanent Joint Board on Defence and President, Canadian Institute International Affairs
C.M. Isbister	- Deputy Minister, Department of Energy, Mines and Resources
T. W. Kent	- Deputy Minister, Department of Manpower and Immigration
L. Rasminsky	- Governor, Bank of Canada
S. S. Reisman	- Deputy Minister of Industry
R. G. Robertson	- Clerk of the Privy Council and Secretary to the Cabinet
G.G.E. Steele	- Under-Secretary of State
O.G. Stoner	- Deputy Clerk of the Privy Council and Deputy Secretary to the Cabinet
J.H. Warren	- Deputy Minister of Trade & Commerce
J.R. Weir	- Director, Science Secretariat, Privy Council
J.W. Willard	- Deputy Minister of Welfare
S.B. Williams	- Deputy Minister of Agriculture Canada

2. Plumptre, A.F.W., "Proposed International Development Research Institution", January 24, 1968, International Development Research Centre Archives.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid.

8. Ibid.

9. The Task Force did not generally act as a unit. In fact, only one meeting of the members was held, organized by Plumptre at Scarborough College. The members and areas of activity examined were as follows:

Member of Task Force	Suggestions for Research Undertakings
John Bene, President, Weldwood of Canada Limited, Vancouver, B.C. and Special Advisor (Forestry) External Aid Office, Ottawa	Forestry
C.F. Bentley, Dean, Faculty of Agriculture, University of Alberta, Edmonton	Agriculture
Irving Brecher, Director, Centre for Developing-Area Studies, McGill University, Montreal.	Social Sciences
Tillo E. Kuhn, Professor of Economics, York University, Toronto.	Transportation
Roy A. Matthews, Private Planning Association of Canada, Montreal.	General
C.H.G. Oldham, Senior Research Fellow, Science Policy Research Unit, University of Sussex, Brighton, England.	Science Policy

Garnet T. Page, Director, Pilot Projects Branch, Department of Manpower and Immigration, Ottawa.	Human Resources
E. G. Pleva, Department of Geography, University of Western Ontario, London, Canada.	Water Resources
L. B. Siemens, Associate Professor Agriculture, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Manitoba.	Triticale Development
R. B. Toombs, Assistant Chief, Mineral Resources, Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, Ottawa, Ontario.	Well-drilling Equipment

Phase III - Drafting of the Legislation, and its Journey through Cabinet, House of Commons, and Senate

In March 1969, a drafting team was assembled under the direction and guidance of Maurice Strong. The team originally consisted of three full-time members: Stuart Peters, CIDA's coordinator for the research institute, Geoffrey Oldham, senior research fellow of the Science Policy Research Unit, Sussex University, and Earl Doe;[1] and two part-time members: Irving Brecher, Director of the Centre for Developing Area Studies, McGill University, and D. Wilson of the Science Council. As coordinator, Peters was an individual of enterprising, energetic skills, and played an important role during this formative period.

By June 30, 1969, draft legislation had been prepared, and was attached to the final memorandum to Cabinet. The memorandum was approved by Cabinet, and the draft legislation sent to the Minister of Justice in order to translate it into legal language. James Pfeifer, a Department of Justice draftsman with an interest in international law, and formerly legal adviser at CIDA, was chosen to undertake the task. In September 1969, the final legislation was presented before two Cabinet committees: External Affairs and Science and Technology.

During this drafting period of six months, Maurice Strong had an extremely influential input with respect to

three issues: political independence, financial flexibility, and the information role of the "International Development Research Centre of Canada", as it was now titled.

Partly as a result of earlier frustrations with CIDA, or, more specifically, concern with the occasional influence of parochial considerations causing delay, Strong was eager to create an organization as politically and financially independent as was conceivably possible considering it was to be a government organization funded by Canadian tax money. Therefore, with the help of James Pfeifer, a truly innovative corporation was created. The resulting species was a public corporation, structured very loosely on the form of existing corporations such as the National Arts Centre or Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. The corporation created was not to be considered part of the public service, not to be taxable, not to be subject to Treasury Board rules, and not to be subject to certain extremely important sections of the Financial administration which governed all departments and corporations of the public structure.* The acceptance of such a corporation by the Department of Justice and the Treasury Board was the result of the influence of Maurice Strong, and a work of legal art on the part of Pfeifer. Moreover, it should be recognized that such acceptance was a reflection also of the favourable, though not indiscriminate, disposition of several officials and ministers. The most serious opposition came from External Affairs

* See also page 59

mainly due to concern for the needs of Quebec, and, therefore, opposition to funds being spent otherwise.

Strong was also concerned that the idea of information and data-banking remain significant in the Centre's operations. This stress was apparent in the overall statement of purpose of the Act, with its reference to the application and adaptation of "knowledge", and in the first "power" of the Act, permitting the Centre to

> "establish, maintain and operate information and data centres and facilities for research and other activities relevant to its object."

During the Cabinet journey, the legislation embodied three of the four objects ultimately included in the Act:

(a) to enlist the talents of natural and social scientists and technologists of Canada and other countries

(b) to assist those regions to develop the scientific research capabilities and innovative skills required to solve their problems

(c) to further scientific and technological cooperation in economic and social development between the economically developed and underdeveloped regions for their mutual benefit.

Objective (c) clearly reflects that the concept of mutual benefit, first encountered during the Steering Committee stage, had stood the test of time. It was particularly

important to Irving Brecher and Stuart Peters, who felt that it was crucial both to tap and augment Canadian resources in development. To the other team members, it was considered useful from the point of view of getting it through Parliament.

Interestingly, the think-tank concept, although undoubtedly still in the mind of Pearson and others, was not articulated in the three objects of the Centre. Rather, the objects were subject to wide interpretation and clearly not limited to the earlier Rand or Hudson type concept.

There was considerable discussion amongst the members of the drafting team as to whether Parliamentarians would accept the notion of the Centre transferring most of its resources to the developing regions, which the implementation of objective (b) would no doubt involve. However, Oldham's personal background in developing countries made him an advocate of promoting technological self-reliance, and the objective was finally included. It is significant to note that the inclusion of the objective was the first articulation of the concept of promoting LDC self-reliance.

* * * *

On October 29, 1969, the legislation to establish the IDRC of Canada was introduced in the House of Commons. On January 12, 1970, the Honourable Mitchell Sharp moved that the

Bill be read a second time and be referred to the Standing Committee on External Affairs and National Defence. This Committee delegated authority to the Sub-Committee on International Development Assistance to consider the legislation in detail. The Standing Committee then reported back to the House of Commons which gave its final approval.

At the time of the second reading of the Bill, Mr. Sharp in his speech reinforced the concept of the promotion of technological capability in the LDCs, which had first been articulated in the drafting of the legislation. Apparently, Mr. Sharp's speech was drafted by Maurice Strong, so that it is reasonable to assume that the following quotation reflected Strong's as well as Mr. Sharp's philosophy with respect to the Centre's role:

> "It will give high priority to programs that assist the developing countries to build their own scientific and technological capabilities so that they will not be mere welfare recipients, but contributors in their own right to the solution of their own problems."(2)

During the activities of the Subcommittee, the need for more coordinated effort with respect to the availability of developmental information was repeatedly stressed. In his testimony, Maurice Strong stressed that "... one of the best pay offs that you can get from a Centre like this.....would be in helping less developed countries to get and make use of existing information in various fields of science and technology and in avoiding duplication."(3)

This need was deemed important enough to include a fourth object:

> "to encourage generally the coordination of international development research".

The inclusion of an additional object added weight to the two other legislative references to information discussed above. The data-bank role was seen as an essential mechanism for coordinating research, and a crucial resource in development.

A second amendment made during the Subcommittee stage was the deleting of the words"of Canada" from the institute's title. It was felt that the inclusion of the words would have a detrimental impact on an otherwise "international" organization. The corporation was to be called the "International Development Research Centre."

The third and final amendment made in the House of Commons was the provision of a clause permitting one of the Governors of the Centre to be a Parliamentarian. Interestingly, Mr. Sharp made it clear that he would not enforce the appointment of a Parliamentarian to the Board of Governors.

* * * *

In March, 1970, the Bill was introduced into the Senate by Senator Martin, and, according to usual procedure, was referred to the Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs.

Following amendments with respect to the number of governors who could be appointed from the House of Commons or the Sentate (one changed to two), and regarding the Income Tax and Estate Tax Acts, the Committee reported back to the Senate, which approved the Bill as amended.

* * * *

On the 13 of May, 1970, the Bill received Royal Assent.

References and Notes

1. After a short time, Doe was pulled away from the mainstream of activities, and devoted his time to the aspect of information.

2. Sharp, The Hon. Mitchell, Speech on International Development Research Centre, Delivered in the House of Commons, January 12th, 1970.

3. Strong, Maurice, Testimony before Subcommittee on International Development Assistance, Issue #13 of the Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence of the Committee (External Affairs and National Defence).

Hopefully, the positive impression that IDRC appears to be making on both recipients and other donor agencies can concurrently assist in the alleviation of aid weariness. Only through such an alleviation can a partnership between developed and developing countries be created, which "replaces fear with trust, suspicious withdrawal by eager collaboration".(7)

References and Notes

1. Hopper, David, "Statement to the Inaugural Meeting of the Board of Governors of the International Development Research Centre, Ottawa, Canada, October 26, 1970, IDRC - 002e.

2. Plumptre, A.F.W., "The International Development Research Centre and the Role of L.B. Pearson" in Fry, Michael (ed), Freedom and Change, University of Toronto Press, forthcoming publication, pp 163 - 164

3. Hopper, David, "Statement to the Inaugural Meeting ...." op. cit.

4. Plumptre, A.F.W., "The International Development Research Centre..." op.cit., p. 163

5. Ibid., p. 164

6. Ibid. p. 164

7. Hopper, David, "Statement to the Inaugural Meeting..." op. cit.